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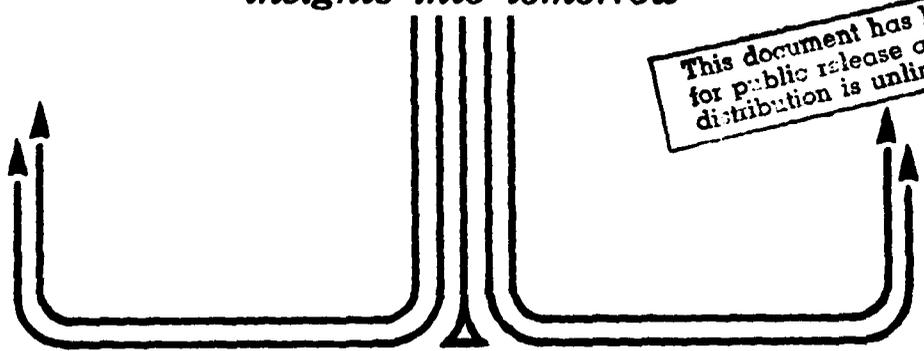
ANALYSIS OF A PROFESSIONAL OFFICER
MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

LEWIS W. HUDGINS JR.	86-1175
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REPORT NUMBER 86-1175

TITLE ANALYSIS OF A PROFESSIONAL OFFICER MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

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Submitted to the faculty in partial fulfillment of
requirements for graduation.

**AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE
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PREFACE

The purpose of this analysis was to determine, through a survey of officer's perceptions, the effectiveness of civilian off-duty master's degree programs in meeting Air Force and officer educational needs. A written questionnaire surveyed the opinions of officer faculty and students at Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College. Detailed findings are discussed and conclusions are drawn, concerning why Air Force officers take off-duty master's programs, the benefits they feel they receive from the programs, and the impact of their perceptions on professionalism in the officer corps. Finding weaknesses in the current civilian off-duty educational system, the authors propose alternatives the Air Force can develop to more effectively use an off-duty master's program to meet Air Force and officer professional education needs. The authors would like to acknowledge the assistance of Lt Col Eugene A. Tootle for his superb direction. Additionally, the authors would like to express their appreciation to Mrs. Diane Hudgins and Mrs. Alfreda Jackson for their fine typing support in the preparation of this report.

Hopefully, this report will provide the evidence needed and impetus required to modify the current advanced educational system that seems to be ineffective at meeting Air Force and officer requirements for essential professional education.

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Major Lewis W. Hudgins Jr. is a senior pilot who has flown numerous models of the KC/EC/RC-135 aircraft. He has completed Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College, the National Security Management Course, and graduated "with distinction" from the Naval Command and Staff correspondence course. His civilian education includes a Bachelor of Arts degree from Texas A&M University and a master's degree in International Relations from Rice University.

Major Jessie R. Jackson is a master air weapons controller with over 7,000 intercept engagements, controlling a variety of tactical aircraft. His duty experience includes one tour with the mobile Tactical Air Control System and two consecutive overseas tours with Air Force aggressor units. In addition, his most recent assignment was with Headquarters Electronic Security Command as chief of Electro-Optics Section, Radar Analysis Branch, Signals Intelligence Support Branch, and as Inspector General Readiness Division. Major Jackson's academic achievements include a BA from the University of Nebraska and an MA in Business Administration from Webster University. He is a graduate of Squadron Officer School and Air Command and Staff College.

Major Anthony J. Kobussen is a 1973 honor graduate of the University of Illinois where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education. Shortly after graduation, he entered the Air Force and has since served in a variety of positions in the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) career field. Tours have taken him to Little Rock AFB, Lajes Field (Azores, Portugal), and Misawa and Yokota Air Base in Japan. Prior to arriving at Air Command and Staff College, he was assigned to Randolph AFB as an MWR staff officer at HQ Air Training Command. Major Kobussen's professional education includes Squadron Officer School and Air Command and Staff College.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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REPORT NUMBER 86-1175

AUTHOR(S) MAJOR LEWIS W. HUDGINS JR., USAF; MAJOR JESSIE R. JACKSON, USAF; MAJOR ANTHONY J. KOBUSSEN, USAF

TITLE ANALYSIS OF A PROFESSIONAL OFFICER MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

I. Purpose: To analyze officers' perceptions of advanced degree programs to determine the effectiveness of civilian off-duty master's programs in meeting Air Force and officer professional education needs.

II. Data: A review of pertinent literature shows continuing education is considered essential in developing effective, professional Air Force officers. From a study of Air Force career guidance regulations and promotion board results, it is clear there is significant top-level emphasis placed on officers obtaining graduate degree education to partially fulfill advanced education requirements. Survey results from officers both student and faculty at Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College provided evidence that most officers perceive a master's degree is an extremely important prerequisite for success in OER ratings and promotion to field grade rank. These findings help explain why an increasing number of officers have taken graduate degree programs. Other data from the survey shows the overriding benefit officers perceive they will receive from a graduate degree is increased promotion opportunity. Many officers stated their master's degrees were of little benefit except for promotion considerations.

CONTINUED

Finally, the surveyed officers' perception was that most other officers take graduate education for the main reason of "filling a square" for promotion.

III. Problem: The data strongly indicates the current civilian off-duty graduate degree system is not effectively meeting Air Force or officer needs for advanced professional education. Additionally, since the current system is perceived by most as a "square to fill", it encourages careerism at the expense of professionalism.

IV. Conclusions: There is a need for meaningful advanced education to meet professional education needs. To meet this need the Air Force should develop a Professional Officer Master's Degree Program.

V. Solution Alternatives: The authors investigated three alternative advanced education programs: Civilian-only, Air Force-only, and a joint Air Force/civilian program. Analysis centered on an evaluation of how each alternative would manage the requirements of three major task areas: administrative, education, and oversight.

VI. Recommendations: The Air Force or a joint-service agency should develop a joint military/civilian graduate degree program. This combined program, by merging the strengths of both institutions, could be rapidly and efficiently developed from current resources. The end result would be an education system that would effectively meet officer needs for a challenging yet flexible professional education program. Moreover, it fulfills the military requirement for a generalist education that encourages meaningful professional growth.

Chapter One

BACKGROUND

It is universally agreed upon, that no art or science is more difficult, than that of war; yet by an unaccountable contradiction of the human mind, those who embrace this profession take little or no pains to study it. They seem to think, that the knowledge of a few insignificant and useless trifles constitutes a great officer. This opinion is so general, that little or nothing is taught at present in any army whatsoever (3:5).

Today's Air Force is totally unlike this characterization of the military of the 1700s given by Henry Humphrey Evans Lloyd in his History of the Late War in Germany. Officers today learn from a comprehensive Professional Military Education (PME) system, hundreds of professional subject courses taught through the Extension Course Institute (ECI), and almost unlimited civilian graduate and undergraduate college courses. Early Air Force leaders recognized almost immediately the importance to effective leadership and management of one of the key attributes of professionalism, education (31:10), and took aggressive action to ensure Air Force officers continued their career education. Even before the Air Force was an independent branch of service, the Air University was established to:

. . . provide career officers of the United States Air Force with the knowledges and skills required for increasing command and staff responsibilities; to assist in shaping and guiding future thought on air power; to develop an awareness of trends in the design, production and tactical employment of new weapons; and to operate and supervise a system of schools and colleges demanded for the effective education of Air Force officers (15:117).

In the years following Air University's inception, it became increasingly apparent that America's politico-military needs required Air Force officers to continually improve their professional knowledge skills.

Since the 1950s, a constant theme from military and civilian politico-military experts has been that changing international and domestic circumstances require America to have military officers that know more and can function and think effectively in changing environments. For example, in 1957, John Masland and Laurence Radway published Soldiers and Scholars, a study of military education and national policy. This seminal work argues that officers must know more than just battlefield leadership. They must also be able to help draft budgets, give advice on foreign policy issues, coordinate with civilian counterparts, and understand domestic political and economic issues (11:vii). Discussing the professional education of officers, Nathan Brodsky argued in 1967 that national policy formulation required officers versatile enough to interface many factors, including political, economic, military, and technological (16:429). Continuing this theme, P. H. Partridge in his 1969 work for the Strategic and Defense Studies Centre stated,

. . . if the military is to be able to hold its own in the discussion and determination of policy concerning military security, it too should have men able to talk the language of the social scientists, capable of acquiring an educated understanding of the political, economic and social forces and circumstances, national and international, which bear directly on military policy and activity (13:15).

The 1970s saw many studies on the need for officers who could keep up with and manage sweeping international, domestic, and social change (10:445; 8:428; 23:253; 9:96). Perhaps Samuel Huntington sums up this theme best in this quote from his 1983 article on the military profession: "The technological and strategic revolutions require of the professional military officer more intelligence, more education and more expertise than he has ever had in the past" (6:132).

This growing requirement for expertise in multiple national defense areas presented Air Force leaders with a difficult problem that seemed solvable only through continuing education. On one hand, there was an urgent need for greater specialization to keep up with increasingly rapid technological changes (6:133). However, too much specialization severely curtails career advancement opportunities, thus destroying one of the motivational aspects of higher education (6:134). Also, the Air Force needed generalists as its top leaders and managers--people who could tie it all together (17:11). The dilemma, then, was to develop an education system that would fulfill at least four requirements:

1. Provide specialist training in specific career areas.

2. Provide a "generalist" education to prepare officers for unspecified duties where a high degree of versatility is needed.

3. Provide continuing education in the profession of arms.

4. Provide a system responsive to the professional education needs of its officers.

The Air Force has tried to meet these requirements with a "twin-pillar" approach to fulfilling its needs and the needs of its officers (27:1-1). The first pillar has already been briefly discussed: the Air Force PME system. This system has been expanded and modified since its 1946 birth through an almost continuous process of needs evaluation and curriculum review. It is not the purpose of the authors to investigate how well this pillar is meeting Air Force requirements. The second pillar the Air Force relies on is civilian advanced education. An important question to investigate is, how effective is the civilian advanced education system at meeting Air Force and officer requirements? The investigating tool used was a survey of officers' perceptions.

Chapter Two

THE SYSTEM

"I suspect it will only be a matter of five or ten years until you will scarcely see a general officer in the Air Force who doesn't have an advanced degree."

-Verne Orr, Secretary of the Air Force, 1985 (21:74)

"I got a degree based on my perception that it was a necessary square to keep myself competitive for promotion."

-AWC survey respondent

"Prior to leaving my last assignment, I was advised that a master's degree was a requirement for promotion--especially for navigators."

-ACSC survey respondent

"To get promoted to major--that's the way the promotion system has evolved."

-SOS survey respondent

Before investigating officers' perceptions about the current graduate education system, it is necessary to establish the importance of this information to the Air Force. Or, to put it another way, is the graduate degree process important enough to officers that any problems should receive Air Force attention?

Almost any discussion of professionalism, from Samuel Huntington's classic work The Soldier and the State (7:8), to AFR 53-8. USAF Officer Professional Military Education System, concludes that professionalism requires continuing education (27:1-1). After WWII--especially starting in the 1950s, the Air Force tried to partially meet this need (it also used PME) by emphasizing the importance of a college degree for Air Force officers (20:8). In the following years, increasing emphasis was placed on the importance of higher education through statements by high-level officials and results from promotion boards. One set of examples (from many available) illustrates this point. In 1962 Assistant Defense Secretary Normal Paul told the fourth Armed Forces Education Conference that college

degree education was necessary to meet military needs (22:21). Two years later an Air University article showed statistically, "It is clear that a selection system has been at work resulting in promotions to field grades for those with college degrees. . ." (19:88). Through pressures such as these, and requiring new officers to have a college degree, the Air Force has developed an officer corps that is almost 100 percent college degree holders. This emphasis on education did not stop at an undergraduate degree.

It is essential to understand--if one is to grasp the significance of any problems in the graduate degree system--the Air Force has expanded its civilian education requirement. Today's officers perceive they must have a minimum of a master's degree to successfully compete for a career. Although the Air Force does not officially mandate a master's degree except for a few positions, Air Force officers realize that a degree is required because of at least two sources: Air Force regulations and promotion board results. AF Regulations 36-XX are concerned with personnel aspects and officer career fields. In the Air Force, each career specialty has a specified career guide, and officers in that career field are encouraged to study and follow the guidance found therein. These guides are the official Air Force position on "when" to do "what" to enhance career progression while at the same time meeting the needs of the Air Force. What do these guides say about a master's degree?

- AFR 36-23: Pilot/Navigator: master's degree desired (25:45,47).
- AFR 36-23: Air Weapons Director: masters desirable (25:57).
- AFR 36-23: Acquisition Program Management: masters at the 7-8 year point (25:87).
- AFR 36-23: Services: "Career officers should strongly consider completing a graduate degree" (25:134).
- AFR 36-23: Comptroller: "Officers aspiring to the most challenging positions should complete graduate level education during the mid-point of this phase (8-13 years)" (25:158).
- AFR 36-1: Air Operations Staff Director, Pilot: master's degree is desirable (24:A8-29).
- AFR 36-1: Air Operations Officer, Pilot: master's degree desirable (24:A8-32).
- AFR 36-1: Command and Control Staff Officer: master's degree is desirable (24:A8-58).

In career field after career field, Air Force guidance is clear: Advanced civilian education is desirable for higher positions of responsibility. Noteworthy is the fact that often no specific area of study is recommended; any graduate program will suffice. To insure officers get the message, AFR 36-23, Chapter 6, "General Information about the Career Progression Guides," states the Air Force position quite clearly: "Each officer who expects to perform in top senior grades must be aggressive in perfecting performance and in acquiring the diversified job experience, schooling and education as explained in this regulation" (25:41). Officers are also told in AFP 36-32--the Air Force pamphlet on the officer promotion system, that promotion boards use academic education as one of only seven criteria for selection to higher rank (26:11). To reinforce what is read from the regulations, there is another source to convince the officer that he must have a masters for career success.

The most powerful and understood form of communication to an officer of the importance of any factor for career success is how it affects promotions. To determine if a master's degree is important to career success, one can look at past promotion board results.

TABLE 1

The Relationship of Graduate Education to Promotions: Major

<u>AIR FORCE AS OF MARCH 1981</u>	<u>NUMBER OF OFFICERS PROMOTED</u>	<u>NUMBER OF OFFICERS NOT PROMOTED</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL PROMOTED</u>
Majors with graduate degrees	7,682	3,035	10,717	72
Majors with- out graduate degrees	<u>3,308</u>	<u>1,786</u>	<u>5,094</u>	<u>65</u>
Total	10,990	4,821	15,811	70

(30: Table 20)

Unfortunately, this is the most current official data on promotion board rates the authors could obtain. The Air Force, since 1980, has adopted a policy of not releasing promotion rates based on educational level. Unofficial information presented at a 1985 Air Command and Staff College lecture listed the following statistics:

TABLE 2

PROMOTION RATE SUCCESS

<u>RANK</u>	<u>WITH BACHELORS</u>	<u>WITH MASTERS</u>	<u>WITH DOCTORATE</u>	<u>OVERALL BOARD RESULTS</u>
Captain	94	97	100	95
Major	68	88	95	79
Lt Col	35	69	77	62
Colonel	22	47	63	43

From the promotion rates shown, it is obvious there is a significant difference between success rates for officers with and those without a master's degree, especially as rank increases. Also, note there is a significant difference in the impact of a master's degree between the 1981 and 1985 figures. Statistics are too limited to make any judgment, but it appears a master's degree is growing in importance to promotion success. In one command, to ensure officers realize the importance of academic education, a pamphlet given to supervisors to explain the officer evaluation/promotion system states, "Master's degree a must for promotion. . . lack of a master's degree is key to a passover" (33:20). Clearly, however, no causality has been demonstrated. Many other factors could explain the differences in promotion rates. Officers with master's degrees could generally be harder-working, or they could be more intelligent to begin with, and thus, a master's degree is only one visible mark of their increased abilities. Other plausible reasons could be offered, but to accurately understand how Air Force officers perceive what the Air Force is telling them through regulations and career promotion rates, one must take a direct approach and ask them.

To learn why Air Force officers take graduate education programs and what benefits they receive from their studies, the authors, in November 1985, conducted a random survey of students and faculty assigned to Squadron Officer School (SOS), Air

TABLE 4

Senior officers expect me to complete a master's program as part of my self-improvement efforts.

	<u>SOS(%)</u>		<u>ACSC(%)</u>		<u>AWC(%)</u>	
a. Strongly Disagree	2		1		0	
b. Disagree	6		4		7	
c. Undecided	5		6		3	
d. Agree	46	} 87	50	} 89	33	} 90
e. Strongly Agree	41		39		57	

The figures are extraordinarily clear. In each school, from 1st lieutenant to colonel, officers perceive they must complete a master's program or fail to meet the expectations of their leaders. Correlating these findings with those of Table 3, it appears the far greater number of surveyed officers perceive they must take both PME and a master's program.

TABLE 5

Most officers agree having a master's degree is an important factor in earning the highest level OER indorsement possible.

	<u>SOS(%)</u>		<u>ACSC(%)</u>		<u>AWC(%)</u>	
a. Strongly Disagree	3		5		7	
b. Disagree	17		22		23	
c. Undecided	11		9		14	
d. Agree	42	} 69	37	} 64	40	} 56
e. Strongly Agree	27		27		16	

This question was asked to try and determine more precisely how officers perceived the impact of a master's degree on what is clearly a key determinant of promotion success--OERs. The findings are consistent and clear. More than half the surveyed officers felt that having or not having a master's degree was an important factor in their officer evaluation ratings. The importance of these findings should not be overlooked. Here is

clear evidence that, in addition to being important to one of the seven criteria promotion boards use for selection--academic education (26:11), having or not having a master's degree affects another, perhaps the most important criterion: job performance (26:11).

TABLE 6

I believe promotion boards consider a master's degree an important prerequisite for field grade promotion.

	<u>SOS(%)</u>	<u>ACSC(%)</u>	<u>AWC(%)</u>	
a. Strongly Disagree	1	1	0	
b. Disagree	4	6	7	
c. Undecided	5	8	10	
d. Agree	46	55	43	}
e. Strongly Agree	44	30	40	
	90	85	83	

This question minced no words; it asked what the officers felt about the importance of a masters for promotion. The results are crystal clear. From a "low" of 83 percent at AWC to a high of 90 percent of the 1st lieutenants and captains at SOS, the surveyed officers responded almost as one voice: Promotion boards want candidates for field grade promotion to have a master's degree. Analysis of results from the first four survey questions clearly highlight Air Force officers perceive they must pursue a master's degree to meet senior officers' expectations and to be competitive for promotion. Has this perception been transformed into action?

Without hesitation, it can be stated that Air Force officers are pursuing higher degrees in ever-increasing numbers.

TABLE 7

Officers with graduate degrees in the Air Force: 1971, 1975, 1980, 1985 (in thousands).

	<u>1971</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>% Change 1971-85</u>
Total Officers	125.9	105.2	97.9	106.2	-16
Graduate Degrees	27.5	31.2	37.0	45.6	+66
Graduate Degrees (%)	22	30	38	43	+95

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Manpower Data Center, Master Files (29:Table 4). 1985 data from (22:74; 14:189).

From the authors' survey, the percentages of officers with a master's degree are as follows: 97 percent at AWC, 95.4 percent at ACSC (85.2 percent had a masters and 10.2 percent were enrolled), and 49.2 percent at SOS (27.0 percent had a masters and 22.2 percent were enrolled). After adding those in SOS who stated they were sure they would complete a master's program (40.7 percent), the SOS figure soars to 89.2 percent.

By now the reader is probably asking, so what? There is nothing inherently wrong with officers increasing their education as long as the educational programs are worthwhile. In fact, meaningful continuing education is essential to professional development. Do the officers learn information helpful to their daily duties and specialties? Is the information worthwhile to improving their generalist background? Does the master's program enhance the officer's ability to perform as a more capable professional? In short, Air Force officers' pursuit of higher degrees is good, if the officers feel the programs are meaningful and not just exercises required for promotion success. To determine this information, the authors again went to the most credible source--Air Force officers.

Chapter Three

PERCEPTIONS OF CIVILIAN EDUCATION BENEFITS

To learn what benefits Air Force officers felt they received from their master's degrees, the authors asked, in the previously introduced survey, several questions investigating those views.

TABLE 8

The benefits I received/will receive from my master's program are: (rank order, 1--highest thru 5--lowest)

- a. Improved skills for specific, job related AF duties.
- b. Improved skills for work after retirement or separation.
- c. Improved promotion opportunities.
- d. Improved competence and understanding for higher level responsibility.
- e. Other.

The choices selected by each school are as follows:

	SOS Rank(%)	ACSC Rank(%)	AWC Rank(%)
a. AF duties	3(24)	3(19)	5(0)
b. Retirement/separation	4(12)	4(11)	3(3)
c. Promotion	1(34)	1(43)	1(76)
d. Higher level responsibility	2(26)	2(25)	2(17)
e. Other	5(4)	5(1)	4(3)

This question was asked to allow respondents considerable freedom in selecting answers. No attempt was made in question construction to force the respondents to select only one benefit they received from their master's program. In this way, respondents were free to select their rank ordering of benefits from a comprehensive list of options. Several noteworthy observations

can be made from data interpretation. First, the choices presented to the respondents almost totally exhausted the choices for possible benefits of a master's program. The low percentage of "other" selected demonstrated this question allowed an excellent opportunity for respondents to select their best answer. Second, the rank ordering of benefits chosen from each school is remarkably consistent. Only in AWC are the least selected benefits (third, fourth, and fifth choices) different than SOS and ACSC. Third, and of most importance to providing pertinent information, the benefit selected first by all of the schools was "improved promotion opportunities." Interestingly enough, the more senior the rank, the higher the percentage selecting "improved promotion opportunities" as the primary benefit of a master's degree. Are the master's programs junior officers taking more effective at meeting the needs of worthwhile professional education? Are senior officers, because of their greater experience, more realistic at assessing the benefits of their higher degrees? Whatever the reasons, for the purpose of this analysis, it is only necessary to note the strong preference for the improved promotion benefit over any of the other benefits available from higher education. However, this probably is to be expected in a competitive promotion system. Any officer who desires to be an effective professional knows he/she must be promoted to be able to influence the Air Force. Also, except for AWC (the most senior school), officers selected for the second and third choices benefits that meet Air Force objectives in advanced education. Answers to the next question further refined how officers perceived benefits other than improved promotion opportunity.

TABLE 9

The skills and knowledge I learned (will learn) from my master's program will be (data in parentheses indicate percentages after officers with AFIT masters are excluded).

	<u>SOS(%)</u>	<u>ACSC(%)</u>	<u>AWC(%)</u>
a. Extremely useful in my AF duty	20(17)	20(16)	16(14)
b. Very useful in my AF duty	34(33)	35(32)	20(21)
c. Somewhat useful in my AF duty	31(33)	31(35)	47(47)
d. Of little use in my AF duty	11(13)	12(14)	17(18)
e. Of no use in my AF duty	4(4)	2(3)	0(0)

This question more precisely investigated whether master's education is beneficial to officers' Air Force duties. It was asked to determine whether the master's programs were providing education in the profession of arms and/or generalist education to prepare officers for higher level responsibilities. As the tabled figures show, there is no clear-cut distribution of opinions. In each school, about half of the officers felt the skills would be at least very useful in their career duties. However, taking a different perspective, the statistics also show about half of the officers felt the skills and knowledge they received from their master's education were at best only somewhat useful for their duties. Thus, no clear evidence as to the value of a master's degree for other than improved promotion opportunity was presented, and further investigation was needed. Analysis of the next question's information highlighted whether officers felt a master's program was worth pursuing for benefits other than improved promotion opportunities.

TABLE 10

If rating officers and promotion boards totally ignored a master's degree, I would still have completed/will complete my master's program (data in parentheses are percentages after officers with AFIT masters are excluded):

	<u>SOS(%)</u>	<u>ACSC(%)</u>	<u>AWC(%)</u>
a. Strongly Disagree	10(10)	5(6)	23(25)
b. Disagree	10(13)	14(18)	24(21)
c. Undecided	14(19)	15(17)	13(11)
d. Agree	34(35)	34(38)	27(29)
e. Strongly Agree	32(23)	32(21)	13(14)

This question, hopefully, invited the respondents to be very honest, and the results are very revealing. In all schools, except for AWC (40 percent), a majority of officers stated they would still complete their master's program. This holds true even when AFIT degree holders were factored out. However, the other side of the picture was also very informative. For SOS officers, if there were no promotion benefits, 34 percent (42 percent without AFIT) would be undecided whether to complete or drop their master's program. For ACSC, the figure is 34 percent (41 percent without AFIT). The AWC figure is 60 percent (57 percent without AFIT). Thus, in even the most positive

figures, over one-third of the officers enrolled in master's programs seriously doubt the benefits of higher education for other than improved promotion opportunities. These figures must be carefully considered when determining the value of the present master's system in providing effective education in the profession of arms or of a "generalist" nature. The next two questions attempted to strongly isolate, in no uncertain terms, the main benefit officers felt they received from their higher education efforts.

TABLE 11

The main reason I took/am taking/would take a master's program was/is to "fill a square" for promotion.

	<u>SOS(%)</u>	<u>ACSC(%)</u>	<u>AWC(%)</u>			
a. Strongly Disagree	25	21	7			
b. Disagree	33	22	13			
c. Undecided	6	13	7			
d. Agree	26	34	60			
e. Strongly Agree	10	10	13	36	44	73

TABLE 12

The main reason most officers take a master's program is to "fill a square" for promotion.

	<u>SOS(%)</u>	<u>ACSC(%)</u>	<u>AWC(%)</u>			
a. Strongly Disagree	3	3	0			
b. Disagree	10	5	6			
c. Undecided	9	7	2			
d. Agree	52	54	73			
e. Strongly Agree	26	31	19	78	85	92

At least three interesting observations can be made from these statistics. First, there is a large disparity between how officers view their own actions and the actions of others. It is arguable which table is most accurate, and for the purposes of this study not important. What is important, especially when discussing intangibles such as integrity, professionalism, and careerism, are the perceptions that officers use to structure their analysis of their fellow officers and profession. Second, even the self-evaluation figures show a high percentage of officers stating they took their master's program to "fill a square." This is noteworthy when one considers the question purposefully used terminology that connotes careerism. Third, the figures from both evaluation questions indicate a promotion and education system that is extremely vulnerable to the charge it encourages careerism.

Chapter Four

THE PROBLEM

Is the current civilian advanced education system--so emphasized by the Air Force--providing the professional education skills the future demands of Air Force leaders? Before the authors list the conclusions, they will present a quick review of important concepts. From a survey of Air Force regulations and promotion board statistics, it appears Air Force leaders are sending a very strong signal to the officer corps: higher education is very important for career success. Data on increasing numbers of officers completing master's programs and strong opinions of a masters importance, substantiated through the authors' survey, are strong evidence officers understand the signals discussed above and are acting to protect their careers. Additional questions from the survey measuring officers' opinions showed a strong feeling that the greatest worth of a master's degree was for promotion success. The value of the master's degree for imparting knowledge or skills helpful to Air Force duties was questionable for many of the officers, and a minimum of one-third of the officers at each school seriously questioned whether they would continue their master's program if promotion benefits were removed. Finally, most officers perceived others used the education system as a "ticket-punching" tool, and at least 36 percent of officers at each school stated they used their advance degree mainly to "fill a square." From the information discovered and discussed above, the authors feel the following conclusions are strongly supported. The present civilian off-duty master's education system is not:

1. Meeting the needs of the Air Force for the effective "generalist" training required for future leaders.
2. Providing support to the PME system for the continued study of the profession of arms.
3. Responsive to the professional education needs of its officers.
4. Encouraging professionalism. Rather, it is encouraging the spread of careerism.

In his article on military professionalism, Major James R. Golden states the essential values of military professionalism are duty, honor, and country (3:398). The professional, in his commitment to duty, is motivated by aspects that transcend personal gain, and thus continues his self-development to improve the extent and quality of his ability to serve (3:399). Other authors point out that careerists, however, get ". . . their ticket punched without any concern for the kind of contribution they are making to the Air Force and national defense" (28:135). This "ticket-punching" attitude clearly places self-interest ahead of the needs of their service and nation and is contrary to the desired professional qualities required by effective leaders and officers (18:41). Careerism is to be avoided if at all possible, for it is a force that is ". . . destructive of all the military professional stands for" (28:135). If individuals view accomplishments mostly as stepping stones to promotion, they may emphasize the appearance of performance over substantive performance that truly benefits the service (3:399). In this light, the figures from Table 12 are accusatory indeed. When "at best" 78 percent of the officers surveyed in each school felt their fellow officers were "square filling" for promotion success, then great damage to the concept of a professional officer corps is inevitable.

Note the results shown are accurate only to the officer population attending the service schools surveyed. It is doubtful these findings are transferable to the Air Force officer population as a whole, as many criteria have been used to select school attendees from their officer contemporaries. However, the authors contend that for the overall Air Force officer population, the perceptions that could be generally grouped as negative to the value of a master's program would be at least as strong (and probably much stronger) as those shown in the survey. The reasoning is simple. The surveyed schools contain the Air Force's most competitive and energetic officers, those who have demonstrated an eagerness for extra work and challenges. Those "left behind" should clearly be less enthusiastic for the work required of a master's program and also less positive about potential benefits.

The authors want to emphasize that no blame or fault should automatically be assigned to the individual officer for taking a master's degree. As we have shown, Air Force leaders and the promotion system place enormous pressure on the officer to continue his education. However, except in very limited areas, the Air Force has failed to specify, develop, or provide access to master's programs that effectively meet the continuing professional education needs of its officers. As others have noted, a service can create serious problems for the future of military professionals if its system creates motivational

techniques (such as promotion success) that "encourage" self-advancement via "ticket-punching" over emphasis on service and commitment to duty (3:402). Thus, the officer is often forced to take whatever program is available simply to remain competitive. In this case, especially when it is multiplied by perhaps thousands of examples, the system itself is forcing officers to engage in careerist-type activity.

Thus, except for limited programs run by the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) which fill specialized skills, one of only two key education systems the Air Force is using to meet the critical need, discussed earlier for developing effective military professionals, has many weaknesses. It is vitally important that officers continue the education that is the foundation of professionalism, but the education system must meet Air Force and officers' needs. Such an education system will be proposed in the next chapter.

Chapter Five

THE SOLUTION

"I would like to get my masters someday--from a good school and I want to be able to spend the time necessary to get something worthwhile out of it (besides a check in a square)!"

-SOS survey respondent

The above statement captures the need the authors propose to meet through a Professional Officer Master's Degree Program. This chapter will discuss a proposed curriculum, investigate options on how the degree program could be developed and managed, and present the best option for initiating the proposed program. Program analysis is perhaps best started by discussing the foundation of any advanced degree program, the curriculum.

Even a brief glance through the programs of service PME schools or civilian institutions offering advanced degrees in military science or military history spotlights there are many differences of opinion on the "best" course of curriculum. However, if subjects are grouped together functionally or topically, a fairly solid consensus emerges on areas that must be covered to establish the strong core of knowledge a professional officer must have. This core was developed by the authors through a comparison of American PME schools (see Appendix 3 for the complete list), a study of NATO military education systems (12:1-120), readings from studies on officer education (4:90; 1:105; 11:282; 31:11,24-32), and the curriculum of the 1985 University of Alabama Master's in Military History. The Professional Officer Master's Program curriculum would be as follows:

REQUIRED COURSES

SEMESTER HOURS

National Security Framework

The International Arena	3
The Domestic Process	3
Regional Appraisals	3
Defense Resources and Decision-Making	3

War

Strategy, Tactics, and Doctrine	3
History of War, I	3
History of War, II	3
Military Management of Forces	3
Land, Maritime, and Airpower Application of Force	3

Leadership, Management, and Professionalism

Great Military Leaders	3
Professionalism	3
Leadership and Management	3

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This curriculum is offered as a place to start; the authors realize scholars more expert than they should develop the final list and oversee the very complicated and detailed work of developing comprehensive course objectives. Yet, it was also developed to show it is possible to determine a strong and effective curriculum to build from. Thus, the program should not be stalled for lack of a foundation. Once the core curriculum is determined, it should be relatively easy to hire experts in each area to "flesh-out" the program especially since the core areas are taught throughout the civilian and military education spectrum. Once the curriculum has been developed, the focus must shift to determining who can develop the program and how the program should be managed. In short, consider all the "nuts and bolts" required to bring the program on-line and manage it to meet Air Force and officer needs.

Three possible options were considered for developing and managing the master's program:

1. By a civilian institution.
2. By the Air Force.
3. By an Air Force/civilian combination.

To order the evaluation process, the authors identified three general task areas to investigate: administrative, educational, and oversight. Administrative denotes those factors that encompass who will be eligible to take the program, how much students will pay, what financial assistance is available, and how the program is accredited. Educational includes the factors of curriculum development, delivery, and documentation. This includes who determines the curriculum, who teaches and with what kinds of course materials, where courses are taught, and what kinds of grading systems would be used. The third major task area, oversight, includes how the program itself would be evaluated. In other words, what would be the method used to measure attainment of program objectives, adequacy of course

content, suitability of delivery, and student needs fulfillment. Using these task areas as criteria, option evaluation started.

OPTION ONE

Option one addresses a degree program managed and operated by a civilian institution. This option presumes the DoD has awarded a civilian institution the contract to offer a combination of an instructor and correspondence-based master's degree program worldwide on DoD installations. All responsibility for program development and delivery is placed upon the school. DoD has done little more than require the school to comply with contract clauses and adhere to program objectives.

To determine the viability of this option, the authors queried several civilian institutions as to their interest in offering a Professional Officer Master's Program. Each of the eight replying institutions expressed interest in offering this type of program. However, all indicated they would have preferred significantly more time to provide a detailed reply. Their replies served as the basis for the authors' analysis of the first option.

Administrative

In this area the civilian institution should excel; this is their business. In the many detailed areas required to manage program requirements such as costs and tuition assistance, accreditation, and program scheduling, the civilian institution is the established expert. Of course, depending upon which college or colleges were awarded the contract, the degree of experience in large scale, off-campus education programs varies greatly. To institutions such as the University of Maryland, this program could easily be incorporated into their already worldwide system. Less far-flung college programs would face a much tougher learning curve, but any well-founded college should have the core of expertise required to develop and manage the administrative details in an efficient manner. However, the DoD contracting agency must ensure competing colleges have the resources to fulfill the job requirements.

Educational

To review, this area includes curriculum development, delivery, and documentation.

In this option, the school has the responsibility to develop the curriculum. As long as their product fulfills Air Force determined program objectives, how they accomplish this task should be of no great concern. However, civilian institutions may lack expertise in some areas of the proposed curriculum and

would require assistance from DoD experts. As Fred N. Stewart, Vice President for Administrative Operations of the Troy State University said, "Air Force personnel have a better comprehension of the type of information and experiences that would best meet Air Force needs" (39:2). For delivery, the civilian institution should be able to effectively employ numerous options. The university may use its own staff or selectively subcontract with professors at other schools who have the required expertise for specific courses. How this is done is strictly left for the school to determine as long as the desired objectives are met. The school must consider the impact of one of the objectives of the Professional Officer Master's Program: to be responsive to student requirements. This requires a program that can be taught almost anywhere the individual may serve. To meet this requirement, a combination of instructor, written correspondence, and videotape program may be necessary. As the Vice Chancellor of the University of Maryland noted, ". . . it is our belief that you might find that economically it's (media-based instruction) the only way to deliver such a program on a broad scale" (36:--). The authors feel the DoD should obtain copyright and ownership of all instructional tapes. This would prevent the loss of material should a different university be awarded the contract at some later date. Updates and modifications to the tapes would be included in the copyright ownership specifications in the contract. One enormous benefit of a combination mode of instruction is there is a great deal more flexibility than in a classroom/instructor style format. Students are not bound to set classroom times and can adjust schedules to fit duty requirements. However, the competing civilian institution must be capable of producing the instructional material and providing required electronic instructional equipment. The last subject in this area is student evaluation and grade documentation. Here, again, civilian institutions have enormous experience and should easily be able to establish appropriate evaluation methods and documentation procedures.

Oversight

Oversight is quality control. The contract would specify the tasks and responsibilities a civilian university would have in conducting a master's degree program. Although the civilian university would assume program responsibility by virtue of its receiving a government contract, government monitoring of contract performance would be needed to verify the program was satisfactory. The school would probably conduct its own in-house quality assurance effort, but final oversight would still rest with the government. To ensure that the program was meeting both Air Force objectives and the needs of its students, a regular student survey program should be used.

OPTION TWO

Option two is a master's program managed and operated by the Air Force. Option evaluation is based on the presumption the DoD has given the Air Force authority to offer a worldwide correspondence-based master's program to service members, DoD employees, and their family members. To investigate the feasibility of this option, the authors conducted personal and telephone interviews, and corresponded with DoD education and training program managers at HQ USAF, HQ USAF Academy, Air University, the Army Command and General Staff College, and the Alabama Regional Veterans' Administration. Responses of interviewed parties and replies to letters formed the basis for discussion of this option.

Administrative

The program entrance requirements would be similar to those required to enroll in the Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) graduate program:

1. A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited university or college.
2. An overall undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 grading system (not a CGSC requirement).
3. Supply the registrar with two copies of the undergraduate transcript.
4. Demonstrate the ability to do graduate work and maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 to qualify for graduation.
5. Record of Graduate Record Examination or Graduate Management Admissions Test scores on the verbal and quantitative areas may be required. This requirement has been eliminated from the Army Command and General Staff College enrollment qualifications because of the quality of students who attend the school (40:1-9 - 1-10).

The authors believe the above requirements may vary slightly to meet specific objectives of an Air Force graduate program. Entrance requirements should be as difficult as those required by similar civilian institutions to maintain program credibility and for accreditation purposes. Degree requirements should be at least as demanding as those programs offered in major civilian institutions. Students would be expected to complete a required number of credit hours in the core area as well as elective courses. Moreover, students may be required to complete a major research project or graduate thesis, depending on the curriculum requirements.

Costs and fees cannot be precisely determined, but would be limited to the price of course materials, instruction, and facilities user fees. Students would be eligible for tuition assistance. Depending on how much of the master's program can be developed by in-place Air Force resources, program costs may be dramatically lower than at a civilian institution. Additionally, any "profit" could go to defraying the costs of personnel and equipment that can also be used for other purposes (e.g., videotape equipment used by Air University).

One of the interviewed parties stated that the most difficult task of starting a degree program would be getting it accredited (37:--). Several qualifying criteria would have to be met. First, the Air Force must appoint a governing body over the program, establish a charter, determine which organization would develop the curriculum, supply instructors, and provide study materials--in short, develop an institution that can be accredited. Next, the Air Force must have documented its compliance with the regional accrediting agency's conditions of eligibility for candidacy (34:--). The accreditation requirement would be the major obstacle for successful Air Force program development. One civilian expert said any Air Force effort to establish an entity that could be accredited to offer this program ". . . would be a long process and most likely not be cost effective" (39:1). (See Appendix 4 for detailed discussion of accreditation requirements.)

Educational

Curriculum determination would not be difficult. The Air Force has great expertise in developing curriculums through its PME schools. Additionally, the personnel at Headquarters Air University and the Air Force Academy could aid in areas not specifically in the scope of PME. Academy personnel stated they have the resources and expertise to aid curriculum development (42:--). If gaps in knowledge still existed, civilian expertise could be hired.

Curriculum delivery is also manageable. The controlling agency may elect to use instructors from the military academies, Air University, PME schools, or contract with scholars in the civilian community who have the knowledge required for specific courses. The latter alternative would, however, increase the cost of the program. Since the program would be primarily based on written correspondence and videotape systems of instruction, instructor workload would be initially heavy to develop the tapes and course materials. Occasionally, instructor involvement to update course materials and videotapes on an as needed basis would be required. There should be no need for a large fulltime instructor staff dedicated solely to the master's program unless the curriculum required extensive

research papers, essay tests, or a thesis. Barring this workload, student instruction and evaluation should be manageable through effective use of on-duty Air Force resources. Course materials would be furnished by the controlling agency but paid for by students. Military facilities (education services offices) would be used for instruction and testing.

Student evaluation and documentation should present no difficulty. The Air Force has great expertise, through PME schools and the ECI, in managing and documenting student evaluations. Non-computer graded evaluations would be managed on an as required basis, with one central office responsible for documentation.

Oversight

Quality control for this option would closely follow managerial practices already established for military education services organizations. The initial approval of this academic program and assigning of control agency responsibilities would be from the HQ USAF Director of Education and Training level, following much the same procedural track as other Air Force academic programs (e.g., the Minuteman Education Program). The controlling agency would ensure academic organizations meet quality control and program objectives by conducting periodic program reviews. Additionally, the instructing academic organization would monitor the program through in-house procedures to ensure quality control and course objectives are satisfied.

OPTION THREE

Option three addresses a combination of options one and two. This option presumes that both a civilian school and the Air Force would work together to develop and conduct a master's degree program.

Administrative

Entrance and degree requirements would remain similar throughout all of the three options. Who runs the program does not appear to have any major bearing on these requirements. Costs and fees, however, would be determined by who does what. In other words, what tasks would the Air Force do, and what tasks would the school perform? For example, if the Air Force produced and provided the videotaped course materials and the school did the rest, tuition costs would be less than if the school completed all major tasks. This assumes that any costs to the Air Force would not be "marked up" for increased student fees. Maximum use of Air Force resources could greatly reduce tuition costs while at the same time fully utilizing (and helping pay for) Air Force equipment and personnel. Available

Veterans' Administration and Tuition Assistance programs would not be affected. Finally, the accreditation membership of the participating civilian institution would serve to facilitate accreditation of this master's program.

Educational

A basic question would be, who determines the curriculum? As the Air Force is the using agency, it would determine what ought to be taught. However, the Air Force should not ignore the expertise civilian universities possess in this area. In a combined effort, for best usage of each agency's experience, the Air Force might determine which military subjects would be included, and the civilian university would decide what the remainder of the curriculum would include. The Chancellor of the Auburn University at Montgomery cautioned,

One thing that must be avoided would be to simply award credit toward a degree for something the Air Force officer is already accomplishing without an attachment to a degree (i.e., ACSC and AWC programs). One of the principles in accreditation of higher education programs is that students should not receive dual kinds of credits. (41:--)

The Air Force and civilian institution would have to work very closely with accreditation agencies when finalizing the program's curriculum to ensure a totally credible curriculum.

There would also have to be a determination as to who presents the instruction. Would Air Force or civilian university faculty resources be used? This option offers exciting possibilities to be able to draw on expert scholars and instructors from both the military and civilian educational arenas to offer an unmatched faculty. For course materials, both the Air Force and certain civilian schools have the capability to produce the written material and videotapes that would serve as the medium through which most instruction would be provided. As an example of this type of program, Auburn University in Alabama has a graduate program entitled "Engineering Outreach" which ". . . combines elements of traditional instruction with modern-day delivery methods to extend educational opportunity beyond the limits of the campus" (35:i). In this program a graduate course is taped while being conducted by the professor on-campus. Tapes are then mailed to the off-campus locations. Students then view them at times convenient to both themselves and the site coordinator. Videotaped lessons are the key to offering worthwhile, current, and challenging instruction on a worldwide basis. How course materials are produced and who accomplishes the tasks will have a great impact on what the program's costs and fees would total.

Concerning equipment and facilities, while the facilities remain the same throughout all options, who provides instructional equipment is an important consideration. If, for example, the Air Force provides the videotape machines, this would affect the price of the contract. The Air Force will have to clearly stipulate in the contract what assets each party will provide.

The grading system would be impacted by the type of resources the program manager has. A program rich in faculty might favor more subjective testing, whereas a program that emphasizes instruction from Air Force resources would probably prefer more computer-based testing.

Oversight

There should be few problems structuring an effective oversight program, especially if care is taken in the initial delineation of contract responsibilities. Each institution has great experience in evaluation functions, and both have "in-house" resources that are expert at measuring performance goals. The authors envision a system where the micro-evaluation of individual teachers and courses is accomplished by the agency responsible for that area of the curriculum. The macro-evaluation, or measurement of whether the master's program is meeting Air Force and officer needs, would be done through an Air Force agency.

Option Evaluation

Each of the proposed options has advantages and disadvantages. Discussing only the major pros and cons, the civilian-only option offers benefits in administrative expertise, an experienced pool of faculty instructors, and a program that is already accredited (thus easing accreditation for this program). In short, the Air Force would simplify the development and management problems greatly by hiring a package deal. There are some disadvantages to the civilian institution option. First, costs to the student would almost certainly be fairly high. Second, there is a question as to civilian expertise in areas of curriculum the Air Force would almost certainly like to have taught. Finally, there would always be a conflict in the oversight function--friction over the question of who really is in charge of meeting overall program objectives that clearly would be hard to precisely define.

The Air Force controlled option offers two major advantages. First, costs to the student would probably be lower if efficient use of in-place Air Force resources occurred. These savings, however, could easily disappear if the program became mired in bureaucratic tangles, lack of direction with no aggressive controlling agency, and delays because of Air Force uncertainty

as to development and management principles. The second advantage is the complete control the Air Force would have over curriculum development, delivery, documentation, and program oversight. Thus, the Air Force could determine exactly what type of instruction is required to meet Air Force needs while at the same time fulfilling officer requirements. Air Force control of the oversight function would enhance effective feedback and rapid program correction if required. Disadvantages of the Air Force option would be difficult to overcome. The major one would be program accreditation, and the authors feel the civilian education system would contest accreditation with great energy and probable success. Accreditation is essential for program credibility. Without it, few officers would enroll in a program that had no real standing in the eyes of civilians and would be listed differently than a masters in an officer's career record. The program would be a failure. Additional problems center on the initial lack of expertise the Air Force has in administering and managing all the details required to offer an efficient program with strong support for the student. There also would be initial confusion over program responsibilities and how to designate instructors. Manpower, if "new" personnel were required, would be a difficult problem, especially considering recent budget restraints. However, except for the accreditation issue, in-place Air Force resources should be adequate to solve the other weaknesses.

This leaves option three, a combination of civilian/Air Force agencies. This option should be chosen as the best method of meeting Air Force and officer advanced education needs. Not only is this the authors' opinion, one civilian expert bluntly stated, "The proposed degree program would need to be administered through a consortium arrangement between the Air Force and one or more civilian institutions" (39:1). By using the strengths of each agency, accreditation problems would be minimized; administrative expertise is already available; a stronger faculty could be assembled by using the best experts from each institution; course materials could be enhanced and expedited through the vast pooled resources available; and oversight would be more effective because both institutions would be intimately involved in the program's management and objectives. In short, this option--if there is proper initial and ongoing program coordination (these would be major tasks), could effectively be used to develop a master's program that incorporates the best of the civilian and military education systems.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSIONS

Earlier, the authors substantiated continuing advanced education was essential to developing the quality Air Force professional officer needed to effectively fulfill national defense needs. Unfortunately, from survey results, it seems clear the current civilian advanced education system available to officers is not providing a meaningful, professionally rewarding education. Rather, it is perceived as a "square to fill" to enhance promotion opportunity, and thus contributes to a weakening of officer professionalism through the taint of careerism. Thus emerges the important problem the authors are trying to solve through the Professional Officer Master's Program.

This program, offered through a combination of Air Force and civilian resources, would effectively meet these key objectives:

1. Provide a "generalist" education to prepare officers for unspecified duties where a high degree of versatility is required. This would be accomplished through tailoring the curriculum and providing civilian instruction for all areas not specifically of a military nature. Note the suggested core curriculum offers courses in the areas of history, international relations, American government, psychology, management, economics, and comparative governments. Civilian instruction would help prevent "military parochialism" and conformity, and enhance the intellectual development that comes from "outside" influences. Finally, even the presence of this course would force competing civilian institutions to upgrade their programs to offer the most value to students in meaningful professional education.

2. Provide continuing education in the profession of arms. Again, the curriculum with its areas of military information--preferably taught by military experts--would fulfill this objective. Note, however, this master's program is not another PME school. It is true some of the suggested curriculum is taught at some PME schools, but that is about as close a comparison as can be made. First, for many reasons including job requirements and limited PME residence school resources, a very low percentage of officers attend intermediate or senior

level PME schools in residence. Most officers complete the seminar and correspondence courses. Thus, most officers do not get the benefits of expanded instruction from the residence schools. Second, even in PME residence schools, subjects are not studied in the detail or scope that would be required in a master's program. As one of the Commandants of the Army War College stated, "There's only so much that can be done in a year no matter how you tailor it out" (2:114). Therefore, the curriculum in the proposed master's program would not duplicate even residence PME programs. Rather, it would strongly complement current PME programs by providing even junior officers a broader foundation of professional education. This program could be called the "AFII" of generalized education, but it would not exhaust any Air Force funds--any costs to the Air Force would be reimbursed through student fees. Just as the Air Force supports a great deal of fully funded education for technical requirements, this program would be the Air Force support for the general requirement of advanced education for all professional officers.

3. Provide a system responsive to the career needs of its officers. In this area the proposed master's program would excel. Because of the flexibility to be built in the program, instruction would be offered at almost all service locations. The program would also allow credit transfer from assignment to assignment. This allows the student the freedom to slowly and deliberately complete the master's program without fear the next assignment would mean the loss of most earned credits. Matching this to operational needs means new officers--the ones who need to better learn their job before worrying about starting a master's program, could spend the time necessary to become proficient in their duties and then start their master's program. The worldwide availability of the program would help prevent the penalty of accepting an assignment where no master's programs are offered. Also, the schedule of instruction could be tailored to the student's experience to most benefit his career. For example, a new captain might start with courses in professionalism and the history of war. As the officer advances, the courses would change to those of a more middle manager nature. Finally, and of utmost importance, this program would do much to halt the spread of careerism and upgrade the importance of professionalism to the officer corps. By offering a tough, but meaningful master's program to its officers--backed up with appropriate statements from top leaders, the Air Force would send a clear message it is serious about reducing pressures that encourage careerism. To make this message credible, it is essential the master's program be so challenging and rewarding that successful completion would give the officer two primary benefits: valuable comprehensive knowledge and expertise each professional needs and a great sense of pride of accomplishment.

Although the authors have concentrated on the Air Force and have no reliable data on other services, discussions with other services' officers attending ACSC indicate their perceptions toward current civilian advanced education programs mirror those of the surveyed Air Force officers. If this is true, then the problem discussed in this paper is DoD-wide and solvable by the master's program discussed in the solution section. In fact, given the general nature of required professional education, and the expertise each service could offer to curriculum development and instruction, the Professional Officer Master's Degree Program should be a joint-service/civilian undertaking. Hopefully, this analysis will provide the catalyst that initiates Air Force efforts to develop such a program.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

SURVEY OF AIR FORCE OFFICER'S OPINIONS ON
OFF-DUTY MASTER'S EDUCATION

(Circle the letter of your response. Darken letter on AU Form 4 computer answer sheet.)

1. My rank is
 - a. Colonel
 - b. Lt Colonel
 - c. Major
 - d. Captain
 - e. 1st Lieutenant

2. As of today, I
 - a. Have at least a master's degree.
 - b. Am enrolled in and pursuing a master's degree.
 - c. Am very sure I will start a master's program.
 - d. Am undecided whether I will start a master's program.
(Skip questions 3, 4, 5, and 6)
 - e. Am very sure I will not start or complete a master's program.
(Skip questions 3, 4, 5, and 6)

3. I earned/am earning/will earn my master's degree through
 - a. AFIT.
 - b. The Minuteman education program.
 - c. An off-duty master's program (other than Minuteman).
 - d. A program while not on active duty.

4. The skills and knowledge I learned (will learn) from my master's program will be
 - a. Extremely useful in my AF duty.
 - b. Very useful in my AF duty.
 - c. Somewhat useful in my AF duty.
 - d. Of little use in my AF duty.
 - e. Of no use in my AF duty.

5. The benefits I received/will receive from my master's program are: (Rank order, 1--highest thru 5--lowest.)
- a. Improved skills for specific, job related AF duties.
 - b. Improved skills for work after retirement or separation.
 - c. Improved promotion opportunities.
 - d. Improved competence and understanding for higher level responsibilities.
 - e. Other.
6. If rating officers and promotion boards totally ignored a master's degree, I would still have completed/will complete my master's program.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Undecided
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
7. Senior officers expect me to complete a master's program as part of my self-improvement efforts.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Undecided
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
8. Most officers agree having a master's degree is an important factor in earning the highest level OER indorsement possible.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Undecided
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
9. I believe promotion boards consider a master's degree an important prerequisite for field grade promotion.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Undecided
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree

10. Senior Air Force leaders consider a master's degree
_____ PME.
- a. Much more important than
 - b. More important than
 - c. As important as
 - d. Slightly less important than
 - e. Much less important than
11. The main reason most officers take a master's program is to
"fill a square" for promotion.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Undecided
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
12. The main reason I took/am taking/would take a master's
program was/is to "fill a square" for promotion.
- a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Undecided
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly Agree
- 13a. What was the main reason you took/are taking a master's
program?

- b. Why are you undecided on taking or will not complete a
master's program?

Appendix 2

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The population of the survey was the Air Force student and faculty present at AWC, ACSC, and SOS on 5 November 1985. The authors attempted to obtain a 95 percent confidence level based on the following formula:

$$n = \frac{NZ^2 \times .25}{d^2 (N-1) + Z^2 \times .25} \quad (32:28)$$

- n - sample size needed
- N - total population size
- d - precision level (.05)
- Z - different factor for each confidence level;
95 percent confidence level is 1.96.

For all three schools the figures were as follows:

n = 307	
N = 1530	$307 = \frac{(1530)(3.8416)(.25)}{.0025(1529) + 3.8416(.25)}$
d = .05	
Z = 1.96	

Dividing the total sample required by the percentage of officers in each school, the 95 percent confidence level sample size was as follows:

AWC	38
ACSC	89
SOS	182

To these figures the authors added a 10 percent factor to account for non-returns or unreliable responses.

For unknown reasons, the number of surveys returned was AWC--31, ACSC--85, and SOS--170. Thus, no school reached the 95 percent confidence level, but all were well above the 90 percent confidence level requirements.

Appendix 3

LIST OF PME SCHOOLS SURVEYED FOR CORE CURRICULUM

Air Force

Air War College
Air Command and Staff College
Squadron Officer School

Marine Corps

Command and Staff College

Navu

College of Naval Warfare
College of Naval Command and Staff

Army

US Army War College
US Army Command and General Staff College

Other

National Security Management Program
Armed Forces Staff College

Note: The authors used a current catalog from each of the above schools to determine curriculum requirements.

Appendix 4

ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS

1. The institution has attested in writing to its commitment to and intent to comply with the criteria of the College Assembly, either current or as hereafter modified consistent with the policies of the Commission on Colleges. As a necessary condition of acceptance of the institution's application for recognized status with the Commission on Colleges, the applying institution must also attest in writing to its understanding and agreement the Commission on Colleges may make known the nature of any action, positive and negative, regarding status with the Commission. The institution agrees to disclose to the Commission any information as the Commission may require to carry out its evaluation and accrediting function.

2. The institution, in order to award a degree, has a charter and/or formal authority from an appropriate governmental agency located within the geographic jurisdiction of a regional association of colleges and schools.

3. The institution has a governing board of which a majority of the voting membership is representative of the general public interest and is without any contractual, employment, or personal financial interest in the institution.

4. The institution has a chief executive officer.

5. The institution is in operation and has without interruption enrolled students in degree programs.

6. The institution offers one or more degree programs of at least one academic year in length, or the equivalent, at the postsecondary level.

7. The institution has a clearly defined and published statement of purpose.

8. The institution has demonstrated it has the means for achieving its published purpose.

9. All degree programs of the institution include a substantial component of liberal arts or general education courses at the postsecondary level. This component constitutes a minimum of 25 percent of the total number of hours required for degree completion.

10. In each curriculum area of the institution in which a major or degree program is offered, there is at least one full time faculty member with appropriate credentials.

11. The institution has developed a master plan which addresses its future physical and educational growth.

12. The institution has published admission policies compatible with its stated purpose.

13. The institution owns an adequate collection of learning resources appropriate to the courses, programs and degrees offered.

14. The institution has established an adequate financial base and has available a summary of its latest audited financial statement (38:6-7).

END

Dtjc

5-86